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ATLANTA, GA., APRIL 23, 1888.

A Pack of Howling Lunatics.

Recent developments in a western court have called attention to a peculiar quasi-religious sect known as Beckmanites. This sect was organized about five years ago in Michigan by Mrs. Dora Beckman. The woman claimed that she was the second and last of a Methodist preacher named Schweinfurth, who had been killed in a duel with a man named Christ. Mrs. Beckman was as the bride of the church.

It is almost incredible that churches of the sect were established in Michigan, Illinois, Missouri and perhaps other states. Mrs. Beckman died, but Schweinfurth has continued to hold these fanatics together. Even in as large a city as Chicago one of these churches has built up a membership, and one of its female leaders has proclaimed herself the wife of Jesus Christ.

People living in the neighborhood of these churches have been shocked by the midnight orgies of these strange religionists. The men fly from wife to wife with a startling rapidity only equalled by the haste of the women in dropping one husband for another. The usual formalities of marriage and divorce have been dispensed with, and free love of the freest possible character has been the rule.

The fact that this mad whirl of sensual implety has been allowed to go on for five years under the very noses of the authorities and the good people of Chicago and other western cities is almost enough to stagger belief, but it appears that no effort has been made to stop it until within the past few weeks. No doubt the matter was considered a delicate one to handle.

At first the Beckmanites probably concealed the worst features of the business, and people submitted to a good deal because it has been the custom in this country to tolerate almost anything that assumes the guise of religion.

But there must be a limit to toleration. When religionists violate the laws of the land, as the Beckmanites are doing, they place themselves on a level with other criminals, and no nonsense about having the second Christ for their founder, and the wife of Christ for one of their shining lights should be allowed to interfere with the course of the law.

It may be that our experience with this remarkable sect will incline people to judge other eccentric religionists harshly. Of course it would be a bad thing to pursue an illiberal course in these matters, but on the other hand we have made the mistake of being too liberal in our treatment of some of the cranks now infesting the country.

One thing, however, is plain—we must make all persons, whether they are engaged in spreading a true or a false gospel, conduct themselves like decent citizens. There is no sense in hearing with them until they run into the excesses of the Beckmanites.

EDITOR RICHARDSON, of the Macon Telegraph, is one of the delegates to the state convention from Bibb. Fate seems determined to plunge this young man into the maelstrom of politics.

THE Bloomer costume that used to be the insignia of the woman suffragists, has passed away. Why is this? Will other characteristics also pass away?

When the Bottom Drops Out.
Our city sister, Knoxville, appears to be laboring under the disadvantage of having no bottom.

On last Thursday night it is said that a solitary Knoxville policeman, who was walking along West Church street, tumbled into a small cavity. Much to his surprise a large part of the sidewalk, about a dozen flagstones and several wagon loads of earth followed him. He managed to keep on top of this mass, but made a descent of fully ten feet. The caving in of the sidewalk, broke on the gas pipe and the water main, and during the remainder of the night the gas burned with a roaring noise and the water escaped from the jets and played around the tops of the houses. The earth continued falling in until the cavity was fifty feet long by twenty-five feet in width. This, of course, made it necessary to close the street for a time. It will be recollected that two or three years ago 800 feet on Prince street went under, causing a loss of thousands of dollars to the city. Under the new courthouse there is said to be a big cavern, and another is believed to exist not far from one of the principal hotels. In the fall of 1883, just after the reservoir of the water company had been filled, the bottom dropped out and five million gallons of water made a straight shoot for the center of the earth.

It has always been believed that Knoxville is built over an immense cavity. If this is not the case, it is at least tolerably certain that the city is built over a formation of rotten limestone, and the fissures and cracks will perhaps in the course of time swallow up more modern improvements than the owners can well afford to part with. Before constructing any buildings of a very massive style of architecture it would be well for the Knoxvilleites to find out whether they are on a firm foundation or on the thin uppercrust of a big hole in the ground. It is no joke to have the bottom drop out, especially when a city must necessarily go along with it.

SOME of the New York preachers say the theater is a bad thing because it always has a barroom attachment. In this view of the case, a hotel must be a very bad thing indeed.

Our Vermont Englishman.
The Courier-Journal says that "the president is an obstinate, sometimes a whimsical man." Considering the state of infestation that appears to exist in some newspaper offices in Georgia, this is a very bold assertion indeed. It has been our under-

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A BILL providing for the execution of capital criminals by electricity has passed one house of the New York legislature by such a large majority that it will probably pass the other house. Perhaps the new method will be better than a rotten rope manipulated by a nervous sheriff.

ATLANTA APPEARS to be a real musical town.

A CORRESPONDENT who saw Boulanger take his seat in the chamber of deputies thus describes

